

IN THE CLAIMS:

The text of all pending claims, (including withdrawn claims) is set forth below. Cancelled and not entered claims are indicated with claim number and status only. The claims as listed below show added text with underlining and deleted text with ~~striketrough~~. The status of each claim is indicated with one of (original), (currently amended), (cancelled), (withdrawn), (new), (previously presented), or (not entered).

1. (currently amended) An automated contract engaging apparatus on which a group of customers being a first party and having common personal data except at least name engages a single collective contract or a plurality of individual contracts with a second party, said apparatus comprising:

a display;

a display controller for controlling said display so as to show on its screen a primary input screen image, through which the personal data of a representative customer of the group is to be input as first registration data, and an auxiliary input screen image, through which at least the name of each of the remaining customers of the group is to be input as second registration data; and

a contract processor for processing and executing the single collective contract or the individual contracts with respect to the plural customers based on said first registration data input through said primary input screen image and said second registration data input through said auxiliary input screen image; and

an input assisting section for assisting in inputting the personal data of the remaining customers of the group using part of said first registration data which part is common to the group.

2. (canceled)

3. (original) An automated contract engaging apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising a screen image switch for instructing said display controller so as to switch screen images on the screen of said display from said primary input screen image to said auxiliary input screen image.

4. (currently amended) An automated contract engaging apparatus according to claim 21, further comprising an input assisting actuator for instructing said input assisting section to input the common personal data of said first registration data as the personal data of the ~~individual~~-remaining ~~customer~~-customers of the group in response to the instructions of said input assisting actuator.

5. (original) An automated contract engaging apparatus according to claim 12, further comprising a screen image switch for instructing said display controller so as to switch screen images on the screen of said display from said primary input screen image to said auxiliary input screen image.

6. (currently amended) An automated contract engaging apparatus according to claim 4, wherein the common personal data of said first registration data to be input as part of the personal data of the ~~individual~~-remaining ~~customer~~-customers is a family name of the representative customer if the group is a family.

7. (original) An automated contract engaging apparatus according to claim 4, further comprising a screen image switch for instructing said display controller so as to switch screen images on the screen of said display from said primary input screen image to said auxiliary input screen image.

8. (original) An automated contract engaging apparatus according to claim 6, further comprising a screen image switch for instructing said display controller so as to switch screen images on the screen of said display from said primary input screen image to said auxiliary input screen image.

9. (currently amended) An automated contract engaging apparatus on which a group of customers being a first party engages a single collective contract or a plurality of individual contracts with a second party, said apparatus comprising:

a display ;

a display controller for controlling said display so as to show on its screen a primary input screen image, through which the personal data of a representative customer of the group is to be input as first registration data, and an auxiliary input screen image, through which at least the

number of ~~the customers~~ remaining customers of ~~in~~ the group is to be input as second registration data; and

a contract processor for processing and executing the single collective contract or the individual contracts with respect to the plural customers based on said first registration data input through said primary input screen image and said second registration data input through said auxiliary input screen image.

10. (original) An automated contract engaging apparatus according to claim 9, further comprising a screen image switch for instructing said display controller so as to switch screen images on the screen of said display from said primary input screen image to said auxiliary input screen image.

11. (currently amended) An automated contract engaging method in which a group of customers being a first party and having common personal data except at least name engages a single collective contract or a plurality of individual contracts with a second party on an automated contract engaging apparatus including a display, said method comprising ~~the steps of:~~

~~(a)~~ inputting the personal data of a representative customer of the group as first registration data;

~~(b)~~ inputting at least the name of each of the remaining customers of the group as second registration data; ~~and~~

~~(c)~~ processing and executing the single collective contract or the individual contracts with respect to the plural customers based on said first registration data input in the ~~first-named~~ inputting the personal data step ~~(a)~~ and said second registration data input in the ~~second-named~~ inputting at least the name step ~~(b)~~; and

inputting the common personal data of the remaining customers of the group using part of said first registration data which part is common to the group.

12. (canceled)

13. (currently amended) An automated contract engaging method according to claim 11, wherein

said first registration data is input through a primary input screen image shown on the display, in the ~~first-named~~ inputting the personal data step ~~(a)~~; and

said second registration data is input through an auxiliary input screen image shown on the screen of the display, in the ~~second-named~~ inputting at least the name step (b).

14. (currently amended) An automated contract engaging method according to claim ~~4211~~, wherein the part of said first registration data is input as part of the personal data of the ~~individual-remaining customer-customers~~ of the group in response to the instructions of an input assisting actuator associated with the display of the apparatus.

15. (currently amended) An automated contract engaging method according to claim ~~1142~~, wherein

said first registration data is input through a primary input screen image shown on the display, in the ~~first-named~~ inputting the personal data step (a); and

said second registration data is input through an auxiliary input screen image shown on the screen of the display, in the ~~second-named~~ inputting at least the name step (b).

16. (currently amended) An automated contract engaging method according to claim 13, further comprising: ~~the step of (d)~~ switching screen images on the screen of the display from said primary input screen image to said auxiliary input screen image in response to the instructions of a screen image switch associated with the display.

17. (currently amended) An automated contract engaging method according to claim 14, wherein the common personal data of said first registration data to be input as part of the personal data of the ~~individual-remaining customer-customers~~ is a family name of the representative customer if the group is a family.

18. (currently amended) An automated contract engaging method according to claim 14, wherein

said first registration data is input through a primary input screen image shown on the display, in the ~~first-named~~ inputting the personal data step (a); and

said second registration data is input through an auxiliary input screen image shown on the screen of the display, in the ~~second-named~~ inputting at least the name step (b).

19. (currently amended) An automated contract engaging method according to claim 15, further comprising: ~~the step of (d)~~ switching screen images on the screen of the display from

said primary input screen image to said auxiliary input screen image in response to the instructions of a screen image switch associated with the display.

20. (currently amended) An automated contract engaging method according to claim 17, wherein

said first registration data is input through a primary input screen image shown on the display, in the ~~first-named~~inputting the personal data step-(a); and

said second registration data is input through an auxiliary input screen image shown on the screen of the display, in the ~~second-named~~ inputting at least the name step-(b).

21. (currently amended) An automated contract engaging method according to claim 18, further comprising: ~~the step of (d)~~ switching screen images on the screen of the display from said primary input screen image to said auxiliary input screen image in response to the instructions of a screen image switch associated with the display.

22. (currently amended) An automated contract engaging method according to claim 20, further comprising: ~~the step of (d)~~ switching screen images on the screen of the display from said primary input screen image to said auxiliary input screen image in response to the instructions of a screen image switch associated with the display.

23. (currently amended) An automated contract engaging method in which a group of customers being a first party engages a single collective contract or a plurality of individual contracts with a second party on an automated contract engaging apparatus including a display, said method comprising ~~the steps of~~:

~~(a)~~inputting the personal data of a representative customer of the group as first registration data;

~~(b)~~inputting at least the number of customers ~~the remaining customers of in~~ the group as second registration data; and

~~(c)~~processing and executing the single collective contract or the individual contracts with respect to the plural customers based on said first registration data input in the ~~first-named~~ inputting the personal data step (a) and said second registration data input in the ~~second-named~~ inputting at least the number step-(b).

24. (currently amended) An automated contract engaging method according to claim 23, wherein

said first registration data is input through a primary input screen image shown on the display, in the ~~first named~~ inputting the personal data step (a); and

said second registration data is input through an auxiliary input screen image shown on the screen of the display, in the ~~second named~~ inputting at least the number step (b).

25. (currently amended) An automated contract engaging method according to claim 24, further comprising: ~~the step of (d)~~ switching screen images on the screen of the display from said primary input screen image to said auxiliary input screen image in response to the instructions of a screen image switch associated with the display.

26. (currently amended) A computer-readable recording medium which records an automated contract engaging program for instructing a computer to function as internal or external part of an automated contract engaging apparatus which has a display and on which a group of customers being a first party and having common personal data except at least name engages a single collective contract or a plurality of individual contracts with a second party, wherein said program instructs the computer to function as the following:

~~of the apparatus~~

a display controller for controlling the display so as to show on its screen a primary input screen image, through which the personal data of a representative customer of the group is to be input as first registration data, and an auxiliary input screen image, through which at least the name of each of the remaining customers of the group is to be input as second registration data; and

a contract processor for processing and executing the single collective contract or the individual contracts with respect to the plural customers based on said first registration data input through said primary input screen image and said second registration data input through said auxiliary input screen image; and

an input assisting section for assisting in inputting the common personal data of the remaining customers of the group using part of said first registration data which part is common to the group.

27. (canceled)

28. (currently amended) ~~An automated contract engaging program~~A computer-readable recording medium according to claim 26, wherein said display controller controls the display so as to switch screen images on the screen of the display from said primary input screen image to said auxiliary input screen image in response to the instructions of the screen image switch.

29. (currently amended) ~~An automated contract engaging program~~A computer-readable recording medium according to claim 2726, wherein said input assisting section inputs part of said first registration data as part of the personal data of the ~~individual~~remaining ~~customer~~customers of the group in response to the instructions of an input assisting actuator associated with the display of the apparatus.

30. (currently amended) ~~An automated contract engaging program~~A computer-readable recording medium according to claim 2726, wherein said display controller controls the display so as to switch screen images on the screen of the display from said primary input screen image to said auxiliary input screen image in response to the instructions of the screen image switch.

31. (currently amended) ~~An automated contract engaging program~~A computer-readable recording medium according to claim 29, wherein the common personal data of said first registration data to be input as part of the personal data of the ~~individual~~remaining ~~customer~~customers is a family name of the representative customer if the group is a family.

32. (currently amended) ~~An automated contract engaging program~~A computer-readable recording medium according to claim 29, wherein said display controller controls the display so as to switch screen images on the screen of the display from said primary input screen image to said auxiliary input screen image in response to the instructions of the screen image switch.

33. (currently amended) A computer-readable recording medium~~An automated contract engaging program~~ according to claim 31, wherein said display controller controls the display so as to switch screen images on the screen of the display from said primary input screen image to said auxiliary input screen image in response to the instructions of the screen image switch.

34. (currently amended) An automated contract engaging program for instructing a computer to perform as internal and/or external part of an automated contract engaging apparatus which has a display and on which a group of customers being a first party engages a single collective contract with a second party, wherein said program instructs the computer to function as the following:

~~of the apparatus~~

a display controller for controlling the display so as to show on its screen a primary input screen image, through which the personal data of a representative customer of the group is to be input as first registration data, and an auxiliary input screen image, through which at least the number of customers ~~the remaining customers of~~ in the group is to be input as second registration data; and

a contract processor for processing and executing the single collective contract with respect to the plural customers based on said first registration data input through said primary input screen image and said second registration data input through said auxiliary input screen image.

35. (original) An automated contract engaging program according to claim 34, wherein said display controller controls the display so as to switch screen images on the screen of the display from said primary input screen image to said auxiliary input screen image in response to the instructions of the screen image switch.

36. (new) A method of engaging a group of customers having common personal data in a single collective contract or a plurality of individual contracts with another party, the method comprising:

deriving registration data which part is common to the group of customers, from registration data of a first customer;

merging the derived registration data with at least a name inputted for each remaining customers of the group; and

processing and executing the single collective contract or the individual contracts with respect to the group of customers based on the registration data of the first customer and the merged registration data of the remaining customers of the group.